

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Currently Amended) A liquid rheological aid for use in an automotive OEM high solids clearcoat, the rheological aid comprising

(A) at least one urea derivative made by the process of prepared by reacting

(a1) at least one compound having at least one isocyanate group with

(a2) at least one co-reactant selected from the group consisting of primary monoamines, primary polyamines, secondary monoamines, secondary polyamines, water, and a combination thereof, in the presence of

(a3) at least one organobismuth catalyst; and

B) at least one additive, wherein the selection is made such as to result in a liquid reaction medium in which the organobismuth catalyst is soluble;

wherein the rheological aid comprises a bismuth compound; and

wherein the rheological aid comprises the urea derivative from the reaction of (a1) and (a2) in an amount, based on the rheological aid, of more than 10% by weight and wherein the liquid rheological aid is fluid and capable of use as a thixotropic agent in making an automotive OEM high solids clearcoat having high storage stability, wherein the clearcoat is capable of being applied by spray application.

2. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organobismuth compound (a3) is selected from the group consisting of bismuth salts of organic carboxylic acids and complexes of bismuth with chelating agents.

3. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 2, wherein the organic carboxylic acids are aliphatic carboxylic acids.

4. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 3, wherein the aliphatic carboxylic acids are monocarboxylic acids.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 4, wherein the long-chain alkyl groups contain 6 to 16 carbon atoms.

7. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 6, wherein the monocarboxylic acids are selected from the group consisting of octanecarboxylic acid, 2-ethylhexanecarboxylic acid, and neodecanecarboxylic acid.

8. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 2, wherein the chelating agents are nonaromatic compounds.

9. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 8, wherein the chelating agents contain at least two functional groups capable of coordination to metal atoms or metal ions.

10. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 9, wherein the functional groups are electron donors.

11. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid of claim 9, wherein functional groups capable of coordination to metal atoms or metal ions are carbonyl groups.

12. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 11, wherein the chelating agents are 1,3-diketones.

13. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 12, wherein the diketones are selected from the group consisting of acetylacetone, ethyl acetoacetate, tetramethylheptanedione, and hexafluoropentanedione.

14. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the molar ratio of isocyanate groups (NCO) in the compounds (a1) to bismuth (Bi) in the organobismuth compounds (a3) is from 300 : 1 to 20 : 1.

15. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 14, wherein the NCO : Bi molar ratio is from 260 : 1 to 25 : 1.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, comprising the urea derivative (A) in an amount, based on the rheological aid, of more than 10 to 20% by weight.

18. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the urea derivative (A) is crystalline.

19. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 18, wherein the urea derivative crystals (A) are acicular with a full or partial helical twist.

20. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 18, wherein the urea derivative crystals (A) have a particle size of from 0.1 to 6 μm .

21. (Original) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 20, wherein 80% of the urea derivative crystals (A) are $< 2 \mu\text{m}$.

22. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the additive (B) is selected from the group consisting of pigments, oligomeric and polymeric binders curable physically or thermally, crosslinking agents curable thermally, reactive diluents curable thermally, organic solvents, water, UV absorbers, light stabilizers, free-radical scavengers, devolatilizers, slip additives, polymerization inhibitors, defoamers, emulsifiers, wetting agents, dispersants, adhesion promoters, leveling agents, film-forming auxiliaries, flame retardants, siccatives, dryers, antiskinning agents, corrosion inhibitors, waxes, and flattening agents and mixtures thereof.

23. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing a liquid rheological aid comprising one derivative (A) and at least one additive (B), as claimed in claim 1, which comprises preparing the urea derivative (A) by reacting at least one compound (a1) having at least one isocyanate group with at least one co-reactant (a2) selected from the group consisting of primary and

secondary monoamines and polyamines and water, in the presence of at least one organobismuth catalyst (a3), in at least one liquid additive (B).

24-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently Amended) A liquid rheological aid comprising

(A) at least one urea derivative prepared by reacting

(a1) at least one compound having at least one isocyanate group with

(a2) at least one co-reactant selected from the group consisting of primary monoamines, primary polyamines, secondary monoamines, secondary polyamines, water, and a combination thereof,

in the presence of

(a3) a catalyst consisting of an organobismuth catalyst present in an amount such that the molar ratio of isocyanate groups (NCO) in the compounds (a1) to bismuth (Bi) in the organobismuth compounds (a3) is from 300 : 1 to 20 : 1; and

(B) at least one additive,

wherein the rheological aid comprises a bismuth compound and further wherein the urea derivative from the reaction of (a1) and (a2) is present in the rheological aid in an amount of ~~more than 10~~ 14.32 to 20 % by weight, based on the rheological aid.

30. (Currently Amended) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rheological aid comprises the urea derivative from the reaction of (a1) and (a2) in an amount, based on the rheological aid, of ~~more than 14~~ 14.32 to 20 % by weight.

31. (Currently Amended) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 3029, wherein said urea derivative (A) is prepared by reacting

- (a1) at least one compound having at least one isocyanate group with
- (a2) at least one co-reactant selected from the group consisting of primary monoamines, primary polyamines, secondary monoamines, secondary polyamines, water, and a combination thereof, in the presence of
- (a3) a catalyst consisting essentially of one or more organobismuth catalysts.

32. (Currently Amended) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein said urea derivative (A) is prepared by reacting

- (a1) at least one compound having at least one isocyanate group with
- (a2) at least one co-reactant selected from the group consisting of primary monoamines, primary polyamines, secondary monoamines, secondary polyamines, water, and a combination thereof, in the presence of
- (a3) a catalyst consisting essentially of one or more organobismuth catalysts.

33. (Previously Presented) The rheological aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the additive (B) is selected from the group consisting of oligomeric and polymeric binders curable physically or thermally, crosslinking agents curable thermally, reactive diluents curable thermally, and mixtures thereof.